

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, M.S. 19-67  
Sacramento, CA 95814



June 15, 1987

ALL COUNTY LETTER No. 87-80

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENTS  
ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ADOPTION AGENCIES  
ALL SDSS ADOPTION DISTRICT OFFICES

SUBJECT: ADOPTIONS BY UNMARRIED COUPLES/LIMITED CONSENT  
ADOPTIONS

The purpose of this letter is to clarify the policy of the Department of Social Services regarding adoption applications and petitions made by unmarried couples.

All licensed adoption agencies and the Department will neither consent to the adoption of a child by an unmarried couple nor recommend approval of an adoption petition filed by an unmarried couple. Adoption is a subject created and regulated by statute for the purpose of promoting the welfare of children who have no parents. The best interests of these children are served by placement in homes where the couple demonstrates a deep commitment to permanency. Couples who have formalized their relationship through a legal marriage reflect this desired commitment. We believe that our policy is consistent with existing law which recognizes the state's legitimate interest in the promotion of marriage.

In addition, all licensed adoption agencies and the Department will neither recommend approval of nor approve limited consent adoptions in which one parent retains his/her parental rights and consents to the adoption by an unrelated adult.

Adoptions by single applicants and petitioners are not affected by this letter. Each such application or petition is to be reviewed on its merits as it concerns the best interests of the child.

If you have any questions on this policy, please contact Ms. Marsha D. McNeil, Chief, Adoptions Policy Bureau at (916) 322-4228 (ATSS 492-4228).

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Loren D. Suter".

LOREN D. SUTER  
Deputy Director  
Adult and Family Services Division

cc: CWDA